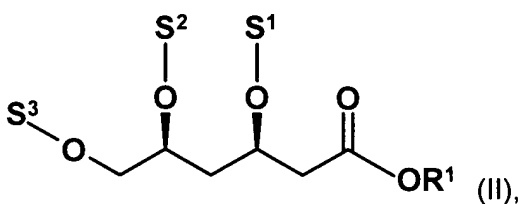


Abstract

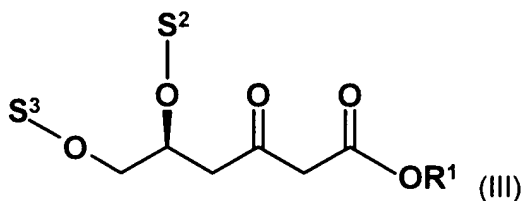
5 According to the invention, a process for the preparation of a statin is provided, comprising the following steps:

a) preparation of a compound of the formula II

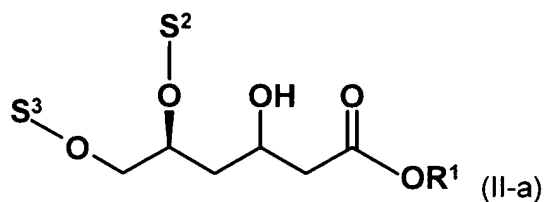


in which

10 S¹ denotes a hydrogen atom or a hydroxyl protective group,
 S² and S³, independently of one another, denote hydroxyl protective groups and
 R¹ represents a hydrogen atom or a carboxyl protective group,
 by stereoselective hydrogenation of a compound of the formula III



15 to give a compound of the formula II-a



and optionally introduction of a hydroxyl protective group and

b) lactonization of the compound of the formula II to give a compound of the formula I-a

